

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 275180

FOR ASST SECRETARY ENDERS

FOL REPEAT ALGIERS 3373 SENT ACTION SECSTATE NOV 19

QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 3373

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, AG

SUBJECT: ABDESSELAM COMMENTS ON CHEMICO SITUATION

1. AT LUNCHEON NOVEMBER 18, MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND ENERGY ABDESSELAM INFORMED ME THAT ALGERIANS ARE NOW LOOKING FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO REPLACE CHEMICO. HE GAVE APPEARANCE OF BEING RELAXED ABOUT SITUATION AND COMMENTED THAT ALGERIANS AND QUOTE OTHERS UNQUOTE ARE QUOTE RELIEVED UNQUOTE THAT CHEMICO IS NOW OUT OF THE PICTURE.

2. HE SATED THAT NEGOTIATIONS BROKE DOWN WHEN CHEMICO REFUSED TO GIVE THE GOA A COMMITMENT THAT IT COULD PRODUCE A RUNNING FACTORY, AND HE GAVE IMPRESSION THAT ALGERIANS DOUBTED CHEMICO WAS CAPABLE OF DOING SO.

3. I COMMENTED TO ABDESSELAM THAT CHANGE IN CONTRACTORS
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AT THIS TIME WILL COST THE ALGERIANS GREAT DEAL.

ABDESSELAM RESPONDED THAT ALGERIANS ARE PREPARED ACCEPT THIS ADDITPONAL COST AND COMMENTED THAT QUOTE IT WOULD HAVE COST US MUCH MORE ANYWAY UNQUOTE IF CHEMICO HAD REMAINED ON PROJECT.

4. COMMENT: ABDESSELAM'S COMMENTS MUST BE READ AGAINST BACKGROUND OF ALGERIAN PRIDE. NEVERTHELESS, FACT THAT ABDESSELAM'S COMMENTS WERE MODERATE AND NOT DIRECTED AGAINST US FIRMS IN GENERAL ENCOURAGING. PARKER

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